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ABSTRACT

Resources on the topic of children of alcoholics are presented in this document. The first section presents facts and figures for children of alcoholics which range from noting that there is strong, scientific evidence that alcoholism runs in families, to the fact that children of alcoholics have greater difficulty with abstraction and conceptual reasoning. The second section lists materials on children of alcoholics which have been reviewed for accuracy based on the latest scientific findings, appropriateness for the target audience, and information conforming to the public health principles and related policies. Books, videotapes, booklets, a factsheet, and a transcript of a television program are included. The third section presents curricula for children of alcoholics. The year of publication, format, context, topic, mode of delivery, target audience, setting, and availability are provided. The fourth section presents annotations of studies, articles, and reports for children of alcoholics. The final section lists groups, programs and organizations relevant to the topic of children of alcoholics. (ABL)

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Office for Substance Abuse Prevention

PREVENTION RESOURCE GUIDE

CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

ED350512

ALCOHOLISM

Tends to Run in Families

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration

May 1991

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This OSAP Prevention Resource Guide was compiled from a variety of publications and data bases and represents the most currently available information to date. This Guide will be updated regularly, and your comments or suggestions are welcome. To suggest information or materials that might be included in updated editions, please write to the **National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852.** *The listing of materials or programs in this Resource Guide does not constitute or imply endorsement by the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Public Health Service, or the Department of Health and Human Services.* The materials have been reviewed for accuracy, appropriateness, and conformance with public health principles.

MS417

Produced by the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention.

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Facts & Figures for Children of Alcoholics

✓ There is strong, scientific evidence that alcoholism tends to run in families.[1]

- Alcoholics are more likely than nonalcoholics to have an alcoholic father, mother, sibling, or other relative. In addition, children of alcoholics (COAs) are more likely than non-COAs to marry into families in which alcoholism is prevalent.
- In research studies, almost one-third of any sample of alcoholics has at least one parent who also was or is an alcoholic.
- Roughly 1 in 8 American adults is alcoholic or experiences problems due to the use of alcohol. The cost to society is estimated at approximately $85 billion each year.
- It is estimated that there are 28.6 million COAs in the U.S.; 6.6 million are under the age of 18. A person may become an alcoholic without having a relative who is alcoholic. Similarly, most COAs do not grow up to become alcoholic. COAs are at greater risk of alcohol problems than are non-COAs.

✓ Children of alcoholics are more at risk for alcoholism and other drug abuse than children of nonalcoholics.[2]

- Children of alcoholics are 2 to 4 times more likely to develop alcoholism than others. At present, almost 18 million Americans report negative consequences of their own drinking.
- Physiological and environmental factors appear to place COAs at greater risk of becoming alcoholic.
- Children of alcoholics are at increased risk for other drug use, especially as they approach late adolescence.

✓ Alcoholism affects the entire family.[3]

- Living with an alcoholic in the family can contribute to stress for all members in the family. Each family member may be affected differently. Not all alcoholic families experience or react to this stress in the same way.

✓ Based on clinical observations and preliminary research, a relationship between parental alcoholism and child abuse is indicated in a large proportion of child abuse cases.[4]

- Rates of parental alcoholism among families with reported child abuse range from 0 percent to 92 percent.

- Assuming a population prevalence of alcoholism of 5-10 percent, the majority of studies suggest increased prevalence of alcoholism among parents who abuse children.
- Existing research suggests alcoholism is more strongly related to child abuse than are other disorders such as parental depression.
- Although several studies report very high rates of alcoholism among the parents of incest victims, much additional research in this area is needed.

✓ Children of alcoholics score lower on tests measuring verbal ability.[5]

- COAs score lower on tests that measure cognitive verbal skills. Their ability to express themselves may be impaired, which can impede their school performance, peer relationships, ability to develop and sustain intimate relationships, and hamper performance on job interviews.
- Low verbal scores, however, should not imply that COAs are intellectually impaired.

✓ Children raised in alcoholic families have different life experiences than children raised in nonalcoholic families.[6]

- Children living in families with an alcoholic score lower on measures of family cohesion, intellectual-cultural orientation, active-recreational orientation, and independence. They also experience higher levels of conflict within the family.
- When children of alcoholics are asked to choose between a drawing of a family talking and sitting close together, a family talking but not sitting close together, or a family that is not talking and not sitting close together, they describe their families as being in the latter category—not talking and not sitting close together.
- Healthy development requires mastering emotional and social tasks at various ages throughout childhood. These tasks include learning how to share, to interact, to engage in problem-solving, and to separate from parents. These skills are accomplished through play and fun activities, expo- sure to recreational and cultural opportunities, and building peer relationships. COAs may be hampered by their inability to grow in developmentally healthy ways.
- Parental comorbidity (e.g., anxiety and depression) appears to be an important factor in determining the nature and extent of offspring problems and should be considered when attempting to discern the unique problems of children of alcoholics.
- Children raised in other types of dysfunctional families may be similar to children raised in alcoholic families.

✓ Children of alcoholics exhibit symptoms of depression and anxiety more than children of nonalcoholics.[7]

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- Young children show symptoms of depression and anxiety such as crying, bed wetting, not having friends, being afraid to go to school, or having nightmares. Older youth may stay in their rooms for long periods of time and not relate to other children claiming they have "no one to talk to." Teenagers may show depressive symptoms by being perfectionistic in their endeavors, hording, staying by themselves, and being excessively self-conscious. Teenaged COAs may begin to develop phobias.

✓ Children of alcoholics often have difficulties in school.[8]

- COAs are more likely to be truant, drop out of school, repeat grades, or be referred to a school counselor or psychologist. This may have little to do with academic performance; rather, COAs may have difficulty bonding with teachers, other students, and school; they may experience anxiety related to performance; those they already confront by living; or they may be afraid of failure. The actual reasons have yet to be determined.
- COAs often believe that they will be failures even if they do well academically. They do not see themselves as successful.

✓ Children of alcoholics have greater difficulty with abstraction and conceptual reasoning.[9]

- Children of alcoholics often require very concrete instructions. Someone might say, "I want to be your friend" and a COA might not know what that means. A person would have to say, "I want to be your friend and that means that you should call me whenever you want to, come to my house after school, and have dinner with me on Saturday nights."

✓ There is no clear relationship between being a child of an alcoholic and having an attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity, conduct disorder, or delinquency.[10]

- There are not yet enough data to determine whether COAs experiencing any of these problems do so because of the alcoholism in the family or because of other problems, or a cumulative result of many problems (e.g., being a COA when parents are divorcing, reaching puberty, or experiencing some other forms of distress).
- Children with fetal alcohol syndrome (caused by high levels of maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy) suffer from a range of deficits that include dysmorphic facial features, growth retardation, intellectual impairment, and disrupted behavior patterns such as attention deficit disorders and hyperactivity. Fetal alcohol effects (less severe deficits) also are caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy and the safest choice is not to drink during pregnancy.

✓ Maintaining consistency around important family activities such as vacations, mealtimes, or holidays, are protective for some alcoholic families.[11]

- If the active alcoholic is confronted with his or her problem, if family rituals or traditions are highly valued, if there are consi- stent significant others in the life of the child or children, and if there is moderate to high religious observance, children can be protected from the problems associated with growing up in an alcoholic family.

✓ Children of alcoholics may benefit from such guidance as:[12]

- Helping them develop autonomy and independence.
- Helping them develop a strong social orientation and social skills.
- Helping them engage in acts of "required helpfulness."
- Helping them develop a close bond with a caregiver.
- Enabling them to negotiate successfully an abundance of emotionally hazardous experiences. Helping them to perceive their experiences constructively, even if those experiences cause pain or suffering. Helping them, early in life, to gain other people's positive attention.
- Helping them to develop and maintain a positive vision of life.

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Prevention Materials for Children of Alcoholics

The materials listed in OSAP's Prevention Resource Guides have been reviewed for scientific accuracy based on the latest available scientific findings; appropriateness for the target audience as described by the developers of the materials; and information conforming to public health principals and related policies. The underlying guidelines used for the review of the materials are first and foremost based on the principal of "do no harm." All materials contain a clear no-use (of nicotine, alcohol, and other drugs) message for youth. *The listing of these materials, however, does not imply Government endorsement or approval of the message(s) or material(s).*

In the Shadows: Children of Alcoholics

Anania, S.

Organization: WGBH-TV; Boston, MA
Year: 1989
Format: Brochure and VHS Video
Length: 7 Pages, 20 Minutes
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol and Intervention/Treatment
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional and Instructor-Led
Target Audience: Educators, Jr. High and Sr. High Youth
Setting: Community Organization, School
Readability: Average
Availability: MTI Film & Video;108 Wilnot Road, Deerfield, IL 60015; 1-800-621-2131; Payment Required: Purchase $395; Rental $75.

This video and discussion guide is aimed at getting children in alcoholic families to understand the problem and to seek help. It portrays a family in four situations that are disrupted by the father's drinking. Two doctors then comment on the reactions of each member of the family - enabling, blaming, scapegoating, etc.

Kids under the Influence

Cohen, C.

Organization: Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Incorporated
Year: 1989
Format: Video
Length: 58 Minutes
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol and Prevention
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals, Community Service Groups, and Parents
Setting: Home, School
Availability: Payment Required: VHS/BETA; Purchase $179; Rental $75. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Incorporated, P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543-2053; 609-452-1128; 1-800-257-5126.

Shows the audience that consumption of alcohol is the number one drug problem among kids. This video explains

the influence of peer pressure on kids to drink alcohol and the health and safety risks. It also explains how easily alcohol is abused and what can be done about it.

Our Secret Feelings: Activities for Children of Alcoholics in Support Groups

Molchan, D.S.

Organization: Learning Publication, Inc.
Year: 1989
Format: Book
Length: 53 Pages, 12 Sessions
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: A/D Treatment Professionals, Health Care Providers, COA's, Ages 6-12, and Support Groups
Readability: Average
Availability: Learning Publication, Inc., P.O. Box 1338,Holmes Beach, FL 34218;1-800-222-1525; Payment Required: $10.95.

This book includes exercises to be undertaken by children of alcoholics in group or individual sessions. They are designed to get the children to understand their situations and feel good about themselves. Some materials are provided, as are lists of other materials needed and resources.

Children of Alcoholics

Organization: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.
Year: 1987
Format: Booklet
Length: 15 Pages
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol, Prevention, and Intervention/Treatment
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: High-Risk Youth
Setting: School or Treatment
Readability: Easy
Availability: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc., 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 01373;413-665-7611.

The special rules and roles of children who grow up with alcoholic parents are discussed. How childhood experiences can affect adulthood is explored. The addictive behavior of children of alcoholics is shared. Many resources and sources of support are offered.

Children of Alcoholics: Meeting the Needs of Young COAs in the School Setting

Scolia, C.M., and Morehouse, E.R.

Organization: The National Association for Children of Alcoholics
Year: 1986
Format: Booklet
Length: 33 Pages
Context: Stands Alone and Part of a Packet/Program
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs, Prevention,and Intervention/Treatment
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: Educators and Policymakers/Administrators
Setting: School
Readability: Difficult
Availability: The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), 31582 Coast Highway, Suite B; South Laguna, CA 92677; Payment Required: $5.

This booklet brings to the attention of the Nation's elementary schools the special problems associated with young children growing up in an environment affected by parental alcoholism and illicit drug abuse. It helps educators in identifying and helping these young

people in the school system who are vulnerable to the effects of alcoholism and drug abuse in the home.

It's Elementary. Meeting the Needs of High-Risk Youth in the School Setting

Organization: The National Organization for Children of Alcoholics
Year: 1989
Format: Book
Length: 29 Pages
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: COAs
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: Educators
Setting: School
Availability: The National Association for Children of Alcoholics, 31582 Coast Highway, Suite B, South Laguna, CA 92677; 714-499-3889.

Discusses the problems and special needs faced by alcohol abusing or other drug using parents. Also includes a resource list of materials for elementary school age children of alcoholics.

If a Child from an Alcoholic Home Comes to You

Organization: National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
Year: 1989
Format: Guidelines
Length: 1 Page
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: COAs
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: Adults, Educators, Healthcare Workers
Setting: Home, School, Community

Provides adults with guidance on how to best help children who approach them for help with problems of parental alcohol abuse.

Children of Alcoholics

Organization: Capital Cities/ABC Enterprises
Year: 1986
Format: Transcript
Length: 6 Pages
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol, Children of Alcoholics, —Alcoholism
Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional
Target Audience: General Public, High-Risk Families and High-Risk Youth
Setting: Prevention
Readability: Fairly Difficult
Availability: Payment Required: $3 each; Capital Cities/ABC Enterprises,825 7th Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6001; 212-887-1725.

This transcript of the ABC News Program on Nightline discusses children of alcoholics — the number of children affected, the type of damage done, the child's coping mechanisms, and what is possible today to help these children. Includes interviews with Dr. Timmen Cermak, founder of the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, with a recovering alcoholic mother who is now an alcoholism counselor, and with several children of alcoholics who reflect on their lives in an alcoholic home.

Children of Alcoholics: Handbook

Gravitz, H.I.

Organization: The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA)
Year: 1985
Format: Booklet

Length: 26 Pages

Context: Stands Alone

Topic: Alcohol, Children of Alcoholics, and Alcoholism

Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional

Target Audience: General Public, High-Risk Families, and Children of Alcoholics

Setting: Prevention

Readability: Fairly Difficult

Availability: Payment Required: $3 each; The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), 31582 Coast Highway, Suite B, South Laguna, CA 92677.

This basic booklet on children of alcoholics (COA) issues deals with the nature of alcoholism, the alcoholic's family, and the dysfunctional roles and rules in such families. Problems and issues for adult children of alcoholics are discussed, as well as recommendations for recovery of the adult COA. Includes a description of helpful resources.

The National Association for Children of Alcoholics Resource Guide 1990 Edition

Organization: The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA)

Year: 1990

Format: Book

Context: Stands Alone

Topic: COA Services

Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional

Target Audience: A/D Treatment Professionals, Health Care Providers, General Public

Setting: Community/Treatment

Readability: Average

Availability: Payment Required: $2.95. The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), 31582 Coast Highway, Suite B, South Laguna, CA 92677.

This book provides a state by state listing of therapists and treatment providers of children of alcoholics.

Kids Talking to Kids

Organization: Children of Alcoholics Foundation

Year: 1990

Format: Video

Length: 17 Minutes

Context: Stands Alone; 22-page Discussion Guide booklet accompanies cassette

Topic: Children of Alcoholics

Mode of Delivery: Self Instructional; discussion starter

Target Audience: Children ages 9 to 13, A/D Prevention Professionals, Community Service Groups Parents

Setting: Home, School

Availability: Payment required: VHS Purchase: $75; Children of Alcoholics Foundation, 555 Madison Avenue, 4th floor, New York, NY 10022; 212-754-0656.

Features five children of alcoholics, four of whom have been in counseling programs. They share common situations in their lives and how they have learned to cope. Instead of feeling sorry for themselves, they have learned to develop their own interests and take care of themselves.

Poor Jennifer, She's Always Losing Her Hat

Organization: National Association for Children of Alcoholics

Year: Available February, 1991

Format: Video

Length: 33.5 Minutes

Context: Stands Alone; Viewer's Guide to be published in 1991

Topic: Children of Alcoholics; Alcoholism

Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional

Target Audience: Chilaren of Alconolics A/D Prevention Professionals, Community Service Groups, Parents

Setting: Home, School

Availability: Payment required: VHS Purchase: $25 - $35; National Association for Chilaren of Alconolics, 31582 Coast Highway, Suite B, South Laguna, CA 92677; 714/499-3889.

Introduced by Suzanne Somers, Honorary National Chairperson of NACoA. Starring Dee Wallace Stone as an adult COA making her first public appearance on a TV talk show on the subject and recognizing her own childhood being repeated in the young daughter of the TV studio's actively-alcoholic producer. As a part of the talk show presentation, a young boy mimes common COA symptoms; his father is the program's associate producer and reveals his own recovery from alcoholism and how his drinking harmed his son. By story's end, the drinking producer's denial has been breached; his young daughter has been validated by Stone's story and concern.

Curricula for Children of Alcoholics

BABES

Organization: National Council on Alcoholism

Year: 1990

Format: Curriculum. Teaching guide. Storybooks. Cassette tapes. Puppets. Flash cards. Worksheets.

Context: Communications Aid, Education Kit

Topic: Alcohol and Drug Prevention

Mode of Delivery: Training

Target Audience: Educators

Setting: School

Availability: National Council on Alcoholism - Greater Detroit Area, Suite 1800, Kales Building, 76 West Adams, Detroit, MI 48226. Payment Required: $350; Basic 3-day Training Course $200.

Beginning Alcohol and Addictions Basic Education Studies (BABES) is designed to facilitate individual development by providing accurate information to children while they are still forming attitudes regarding health-related matters. In the BABES program, children ages 3 through 8 are assisted in self-expression and exploration to develop valuable coping skills. They are also given information regarding the use and abuse of alcohol. It is reasoned that if the information is presented in its proper perspective the child will be better equipped to deal with situations affected by alcohol or alcoholism later in life.

Children Are People - Chemical Abuse Prevention

Lerner, R., and Naiditch, B.

Organization: Childre ...re People, Inc.

Year: 1986

Format: Curriculum

Length: 8 Weeks

Context: Stands Alone, Part of a Packet/Program,and has Training Component

Topic: Alcohol/Drugs and Prevention

Mode of Delivery: Instructor-led

Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals, Educators—K to 6, and High-Risk Families

Setting: School

Availability: Children Are People, Inc., 493 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102; 612-227-4031.

This is a school curriculum specifically for children from chemically dependent families. This curriculum also includes support groups for youth and parental and community information workshops. No specific no-use message is given.

Feelings, Body Changes & Stress. A Curriculum for Preschoolers on Stress Education

Organization: Holistic Stress Control Institute, Preschool Stress Relief Project

Year: 1988

Format: Curriculum

Length: 6 Sessions

Context: Part of a Packet/Program

Topic: Prevention

Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led

Target Audience: Educators—Preschool

Setting: School

Readability: Average

Availability: Payment Required: $40; Holistic Stress Control Institute, Preschool Stress Relief Project, P.O. Box 42481, Atlanta, GA 30311; 404-344-2021.

This primary prevention project is designed to enable teachers to instruct high-risk pre-schoolers in developing positive coping skills for stress reduction in their lives. High-risk children are the primary target population. There is no specific alcohol and drug component.

Kids Are Special

Organization: Marco Systems, Inc.

Year: 1985

Format: Curriculum

Length: 7 Sessions

Context: Stands Alone, Training Component

Topic: Alcohol/Drugs and Prevention, Intervention/Treatment

Mode of Delivery: Self-Instructional and Instructor-Led

Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals, A/D Treatment Professionals, Educators —Grades K to 12, and Parents

Setting: Community Organization, School

Availability: Payment Required: $250; Marco Systems, Inc., 525 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126; 408-995-6633.

Provides both school and community programs to assist children of alcoholics or children of chemically-dependent parents. The K-12 school program has three distinct components: teacher training, parent workshop and 7-week prevention groups. Using these educational role playing exercises facilitated by group leaders, children learn to say no.

New Skills Program - Facial Expression Cards, Leader Manual, Mask Cards, and Student Workbook

Organization: Manisses Communications, Inc.

Year: 1985

Format: Expression Cards, Curriculum, Mask Cards

Length: 20 Pages

Context: Stands Alone and Part of a Packet/Program

Topic: Prevention

Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led

Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals, A/D Treatment Professionals, Educators

Setting: Schools

Availability: Payment Required: $99; Rhode Island Youth Guidance Center, Three Governor Street, P.O. Box 3357, Wayland Square, Providence, RI 02906-0357; 401-831-6020.

New Skills is a two-level education intervention program for children aged 8-12 with a problem-drinking or alcoholic parent. The facial expression cards help the children identify feelings and to facilitate discussions. The 16 units in the Leader Manual and Student Workbook are organized around major goals with an activity outlined for each unit. Social life skills for COAs such as relationships, self-esteem, and communication of feelings are stressed, with very little specific alcohol and drug information. The four mask cards portray the contrast between the child's inner feelings and the roles they play at home and in school.

Paper People

DeRoche, J., et al.

Organization: The Knopf Company, Inc.
Year: 1987
Revision Date: 1989
Sponsor/Endorser Department of Education
Format: Curriculum
Length: 8 Sessions
Context: Stands Alone, Training Component
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs and Prevention
Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led
Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals and Educators—Grades K-2
Setting: School
Availability: Knopf Communications Corp., 1126 South Main Street, Plymouth, MI 48170; 313-455-4343. Payment Required: $325.

Multisensory props are used (including puppets, stickers, songs, cassettes and flannel board) to complement this primary grades curriculum. This program is designed to identify children at risk and to facilitate early intervention.

The Images Within

Organization: Children of Alcoholics Foundation
Year: 1990
Format: Alcohol Education and Prevention Program
Length: Standard 3-Session Program
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Education, Prevention
Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led
Target Audience: Children of Alcoholics Aged 10-13
Setting: School, Community Organization
Readability: Average
Availability: Payment Required: $155 (Includes shipping); more than 10 units sent to the same address; ($140); Children of Alcoholics Foundation, P.O. Bo 4185, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-4185; 212-351-2680.

The Images Within: A Child's View of Parental Alcoholism is an alcohol education and prevention program which teaches about family alcoholism, raises awareness of the effects of parental alcohol abuse on children, and provides information about resources for help. The Images Within stands alone or serves as a complement to existing alcohol education programs. (Includes: drawings, handouts-discussion guidelines, and detailed plans for three 40-minute sessions for children ages 10-13.)

The Foundations Curriculum

Organization: Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects
Year: 1989
Format: Curriculum
Length: 49 Sessions
Context: Stands Alone
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs and Prevention
Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led
Target Audience: Educators—Preschool
Setting: School
Readability: Average
Availability: Saint Vincent College Prevention Project, St. Vincent College, La Trobe, PA 15650; 412-439-9761 ext. 590 or 281;Payment Required: $800; includes 49 guide books, three film strips, two cassette albums and a set of eight posters.

This curriculum is a preschool drug and alcohol prevention program for three, four, and five year olds. Positive life skills are presented along with a specific no-use message. Areas covered included fostering independence, self concept, coping, relationships, decision making, drugs and alcohol information, and resource and curriculum bibliography. Objectives are clearly stated, and the lesson plans support the objectives.

The curriculum contains illustrations of medicines but with a clear no-use message.

The Gateway Alcohol/Drug Curriculum Guide

Organization: The New York State Division of Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse

Year: 1990

Format: Curriculum Guide

Length: 76 Pages

Context: Stands Alone and Part of a Packet/Program

Topic: Alcohol

Mode of Delivery: Instructor-Led

Target Audience: A/D Prevention Professionals and Educators—Grades K-12

Setting: School

Availability: Requests must be in written form to the organization. Single copy available free of charge; The New York State Division of Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse, 194 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210; 318-473-3460.

This supplement presents messages that discourage the use of alcohol by students and reinforce risk avoidance and prevention concepts. It also adds a new focus on the special needs of COAs. A resource guide is included.

Studies, Articles, & Reports for Children of Alcoholics

Children of Alcoholics: Are They Different?

Alcohol Alert No 9, Ph 228, 1990.
(Reprints available from the publisher.)

Recent research on prevalence and development of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems among children living with at least one alcoholic parent with reference to methodological limitations of current children of alcoholic (COA) research.Three questions are addressed: 1) What contributes to the resilience of some COAs; 2) Do COAs differ from children of nonalcoholics (non-COAs); and 3) Are these differences specifically related to parental alcoholism or are they similar to characteristics observed in children whose parents have other illnesses?Most research indicates that while some COAs suffer negative consequences, most function well and do not develop serious problems. In comparative studies, differences in cognitve performance between COAs and nonCOAs are observed most frequently; however, most COAs perform within normal ranges although they tend to underestimate their own ability. Parental alcoholism is also linked to psychological disorders in children, including depression, anxiety, generalized stress, low self-esteem, lack of control over the environment, and to behavioral problems, such as lying, stealing, fighting, truancy, conduct disorders, overactivity, and impulsivity. In addition, families of alcoholics have lower levels of cohesion, expressiveness, independence, and intellectual orientation and higher levels of conflict compared with nonalcoholic families. However, the characteristics of families with recovering alcoholic members and of families with no alcoholic members do not differ significantly. Further research on the characteristics of COAs and non-COAs is suggested. 29 Ref.

Children of Alcoholics: A Comprehensive Bibliography

Windle, M.

Buffalo, NY: New York State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, 1989.
(Reprints available from the publisher.)

A comprehensive bibliography of the literature on children of alcoholics (COAs) is presented. Headings within this volume include: biochemical literature; neuropsychological and neurophysiological, behavior genetic literature; temperament and personality literature; family literature; prevention and intervention literature; and general (miscellaneous) literature. Each section is prefaced with a brief 1-2 page summary of the findings.

Intervention with Visually-Impaired Children of Alcoholics

Saulnier, C.

Alcohol Health and Research World 13(2): 133-137, 1989.

(Reprints available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852.)

Intervention and treatment services for visually-impaired children of alcoholics are discussed. Headings within this article include: the nature of the impairment; counseling the recently impaired; problems in treatment: denial and guilt; problems in treatment: discrimination and self-image; coping with violence; outreach; and taking the first practical steps. Service providers in rehabilitation should examine their commitment to normalization to ensure that it does not interfere with the ability to acknowledge alcoholism. The lack of systematic inquiries to identify alcohol abuse among persons entering a rehabilitation program is a serious problem, and alcoholic service providers can consult with those with complementary skills and actively seek to acquire new skills so that visually-impaired children of alcoholics can have their therapeutic needs addressed. 16 Ref.

Working with Children of Alcoholics: The Practitioner's Handbook

Robinson, B.E.

Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

This book, written for health professionals, provides guidelines for identifying and treating children of alcoholics. Chapter headings in this book include: living and surviving in an alcoholic home; psychological adjustment of children of alcoholics; health and safety hazards; academic and behavioral concerns; identifying preschool children of alcoholics; identifying school-age and adolescent children of alcoholics; effective programs for children of alcoholics; treatment strategies for children of alcoholics; intergenerational transmission of alcoholism; and resources for working with children of alcoholics. The book includes examples of children's art and case studies from clinical practice, as well as additional resources and readings. 220 Ref.

Personality Profiles of Children of Alcoholics

Calder, P., and Kostyniuk, A.

Professional Psychology: Research and Practice 20(6): 417-418, 1989.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

Personality profiles of children of alcoholics were analyzed. The study sample included 62 children of parents who were in treatment for alcoholism and who responded to a questionnaire. Of the parental group 33 were fathers and 29 were mothers of the children who were aged 6 to 16 years. Study results revealed that the children had mean scores on the family relations, delinquency, depression, and withdrawal scales that were more than one standard deviation above the norm, although there was a great deal of variation in individual profiles. However, the majority of the children did not show signs of adjustment problems. It is concluded that there is not a standard profile for children of alcoholics and that the

stereotypic negative profile that is painted for children of alcoholics may not be accurate for most of these children. 9 Ref.

Children of Alcoholics: A Target for Prevention Efforts

Svikis, D.S.

In *Alcoholism and Chemical Dependency in the Workplace*, C. Wright, editor, 301-310. Philadelphia, PA: Hanley and Belfus, Inc., 1989.

(Reprints available from Dace S. Svikis, Clinical Services Manager, Alcoholism Treatment Services, D-5-C, Francis Scott Key Medical Center, 4940 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21224.)

Children of alcoholics as a target for prevention efforts are discussed. Headings within this article include: primary prevention; targeted prevention strategies; children of alcoholics; adoption studies; actual risks; other high-risk groups; risk of other problems; and practical issues. It is concluded that recognition that alcoholism is a family disease may help in the identification of those at high risk for alcohol or drug abuse. Therefore, prevention strategies directed at children of alcoholics may be an effective strategy. However, it is stressed that not all alcoholics are children of alcoholics and that not all children of alcoholics become alcoholic. Prevention efforts must, therefore, be directed at other groups as well. 36 Ref.

Drinking, Drinking Styles, and Drug Use in Children of Alcoholics, Depressives, and Controls

Johnson, S.

Journal of Studies of Alcohol 50(5): 427-431, 1989.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

Adolescent children of alcoholic, depressive, and normal control fathers were assessed with a variety of alcohol and drug use measures. Children of alcoholics were quite similar to the other two groups with regard to alcohol consumption, reasons for drinking, attitudes toward temperate and intemperate use of alcohol, and the typical drinking context. However, children of alcoholics, both male and female, were more likely to report drug use than children of depressives or children of normal controls. These findings suggest that although children of alcoholics are at risk for the development of alcoholism, deviant drinking practice may not be discernible in adolescence. 28 Ref.

Depressive Affect in School-Aged Children of Alcoholics

Rolf, J.E.; Johnson, J.L.; Israel, E.; and Chandra, A.

British Journal of Addiction 83(7): 841-848, 1988.

(Reprints available from Dr. Jon E. Rolf, The Johns Hopkins University, School of Hygiene and Public Health, Dept. of Maternal and Child Health, 615 N. Wolfe St., Baltimore, MD 21215.)

This paper presents evidence documenting risks for affective problems and disorders among minor children of alcoholics. Subjects studied were 98 youths from alcoholic-headed and control families participating in a risk for alcoholism research project. Depressive affect questionnaires were completed by the mothers of the youths as well as the youths themselves. ANOVA's and ANCOVA's (co-varying for age) indicated significant group differences on

both maternal and youth ratings with more affective problems shown for the offspring of alcoholics. Outliers with extreme depressive affect scores occurred most frequently for the youths in the high risk for alcoholism group. Findings are discussed with regard to risk group membership, gender, source for information, and the data's implications for further analyses as well as for the design of future studies.

Research on Children of Alcoholics: Past and Future

Woodside, M.

British Journal of Addiction 83: 785-792, 1988. (Reprints available from the publisher.)

There are 28.6 million children of alcoholics in the United States: one out of every eight Americans. Many of them suffer negative physical, mental, and emotional consequences as a result of parental alcoholism. Research investigations of their health status, cognitive abilities, and adaptive behaviors confirm these problems, although notable impediments to research efforts presently exist. Among the fruitful areas for future study are investigations which explore levels of vulnerability and risk factors for children of alcoholics in combination with genetic and psychosocial factors. Other recommendations for study as well as the major activities of the Children of Alcoholics Foundation to promote and disseminate research findings and new data are described.

How to Help Recovering Families Struggle to Get Well: What Treatment Centers Need to Know About Helping Children of Alcoholics

Oliver-Diaz, P.

FOCUS on Chemically Dependent Families 11(2): 20-21, 49-50, 1988.

The role of children in the recovery of the alcoholic's family is discussed. Including children in the recovery process, teaching parenting skills to recovering alcoholics, and clarification of misunderstood or unfamiliar aspects of the recovery process are important both to the children and to the recovering alcoholic. It is noted that children need to feel safe with parents who are capable of caring for them. Additionally, children should not feel responsible for their parents. Therefore, information should be given in ways that will not cause additional stress and will assure children that the recovery is a family process. Children should not be forced to attend support groups such as Alateen unless they wish to; they need the freedom to make their own choices, to ask for and receive information when they are ready and when they want it. For both recovering alcoholics and treatment professionals, being available to these children and sensitive to their needs will facilitate the transition to recovery.

Children of Alcoholics

Johnson, J.L.

Organization: National Institute on Drug Abuse

Source Document: Unpublished; NSAD Workshop, January, 1990

For further information, write to NCADI, P.O. Box 2345 Rockville, MD 20852

Source I.D.: Presented at the NSAD Workshop, Royal Police College, January 17, 1990

Year: 1990

Medium: Journal Article

Availability: Reprints available from author

Children of alcoholic and drug abusing parents must overcome many obstacles to create healthy visions of the future. One report estimates that the consumption of absolute alcohol in New Zealand has increased by nearly 100 percent since World War II. The children of about 5 percent of the New Zealand population can be considered at risk for subsequent alcoholism, alcohol-related problems, and maladaptive behavior. Alcoholism is a family disease. Two approaches have been traditionally used to study the transmission of alcoholism. First, the genetic perspective: a biologically determined inclination toward becoming alcoholic is considered to be the basic factor in transmission. Second, the environmental (or cultural) point of view emphasizes the influence of social or familial values and behaviors regarding alcohol use on the development of alcoholism among the offspring of alcoholics. Today, most alcohol researchers prefer a multifactorial framework where genetic composition serves as a predisposing factor while particular cultural experience constitutes a precipitating factor in the transmission of alcoholism. The development of the adult children of alcoholics (ACOA) movement in the United States and New Zealand is described briefly. 26 Ref.

Forgotten No Longer: An Overview of Research of Chemically Dependent Parents

Johnson, J.L.

In *Children of Chemically Dependent Parents: Academic, Clinical, and Public Policy Perspectives.* New York: Bruner/Mazel, Inc., 1990.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

This chapter discusses the research literature on children of alcoholics and children of other substance abusing parents. The children from these two types of families are separately addressed to clarify the role that heterogeneous, biological, and cultural influences may have on childhood behavioral outcomes in high-risk children. This overview of the literature reveals that while research on children of alcoholics is burgeoning, little is known about children of other substance abusers.

Children of the Garden Island

Werner, E.E.

Scientific American 106-111, April 1989.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

A longitudinal study of the effects of adverse early child rearing conditions on child development is discussed. The study began in 1954 on Kauai, the Garden Island of Hawaii. A cohort of 698 infants born on the island in 1955 was studied. As the study progressed, the researchers began to take a special interest in certain "high-risk" children. About 30 percent of the surviving children (201 individuals) were designated high-risk. In spite of exposure to reproductive stress, discordant and impoverished home lives, and uneducated, alcoholic, or mentally disturbed parents, one out of three of these children (72 in-

dividuals) went on to develop healthy personalities, stable careers, and strong interpersonal relations. As the researchers followed these children from birth to the age of 18, two trends were noted: the impact of reproductive stress diminished with time, and the developmental outcome of virtually every biological risk condition was dependent on the quality of the rearing environment. Several protective factors emerged that helped the children resist stress. These included a fairly high activity level, a low degree of excitability and distress, and a high degree of sociability. The resilient youngsters tended to come from families having four or fewer children, and they had the opportunity to establish a close bond with at least one person from whom they received positive attention during the first years of life. The findings indicated that risk factors and stressful environments do not inevitably lead to poor adaptation. At each stage in the individual's development, there is a shifting balance between stressful events that heighten vulnerability and protective factors that enhance resilience.

When Children Change: Research Perspectives on Children of Alcoholics

Johnson, J.L., and Rolf, J.E.

In *Alcohol and the Family*, R.L. Collins; K.E. Leonard; and J.S. Searles, 162-193. New York, NY: Guilford Press, Publisher, 1990

Research on the developmental process in children of alcoholics is discussed. The most compelling data from the psychosocial literature suggest that children of alcoholics might have more problems than children of nonalcoholics. To date, research has not revealed the intricacies of these problems or the nature of their impact. The authors argue that it is not only poor methodology which prevents researchers from answering specific questions about children of alcoholics, but that the normal developmental changes inherent in childhood complicate our research questions, designs, and interpretations. A comprehensive view of the individual child is necessary. The variables which must be measured in an assessment of childhood behaviors include contextual variables, such as macroenvironment, school and home, and individual variables, such as cognition, affect, alcohol and drug history, stress and self-concept. The implications for psychosocial research on children of alcoholics are twofold. First, researchers can select a developmental trajectory to study. Secondly, psychosocial maladaptation and risk for alcoholism in children of alcoholics may be comparatively unique, but until we identify the trajectories of adaptive and maladaptive behavior we will be unable to answer the question of whether we observe a true deficit or a developmental delay.

Resilient Offspring of Alcoholics: A Longitudinal Study from Birth to Age 18

Werner, E.E.

Journal of Studies on Alcohol 47(1): 34-40, 1986.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

This study focuses on child characteristics and on the qualities of the caregiving environment that differentiated between offspring of alcoholics who did and those who did not develop serious coping problems by age 18. The 49 subjects (22 male) are members of a multiracial cohort of 698 chil-

dren born in 1955 on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, who were followed at ages 1, 2, 10, and 18. In this group, males and the offspring of alcoholic mothers had higher rates of psychosocial problems in childhood and adolescence than females and the offspring of alcoholic fathers. Children of alcoholics who developed no serious coping problems by age 18 differed from those who did in characteristics of temperament, communication skills, self-concept, and locus of control. They also had experienced fewer stressful life events disrupting their family unit in the first two years of life. Results of the study support a transactional model of human development and demonstrate bidirectionality of child-caregiver effects.

Adult Children of Alcoholics on College Campuses: A Group Approach to Intervention

Mathews, B., and Oaks, J.

Health Values 14(1): 9-15, 1990.

(Reprints available from Judy Oaks, Ed.D., Dept. of Health Education, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614-0002.)

This article describes an intervention designed to increase awareness of the problems associated with alcohol abuse and to provide a group intervention program for adult children of alcoholics on college and university campuses. Alcoholism is a family disease that not only affects every member of the family but is often repeated in subsequent generations. Adult children of alcoholics are at high risk either to become alcoholic themselves or to develop repeated unhealthy behavior patterns in their own adult relationships. Interventions designed to break this cycle of addiction deserve serious consideration in health-oriented program planning.

Resilient Children

Werner, E.E.

Young Children 40: 68-72, 1984.

(Reprints available from the publisher.)

Even in the most terrible homes, beset with physical problems, some children appear to develop stable, healthy personalities and to display remarkable resilience. Several studies have revealed protective factors within children that have four central characteristics in common: (1) an active, evocative approach toward solving life's problems; (2) a tendency to perceive their experiences constructively, even if they caused pain or suffering; (3) the ability to gain other people's positive attention; and (4) a strong ability to use faith in order to maintain a positive vision of a meaningful life. Research on resilient children provides a focus on the self-righting tendencies that appear to move some children toward normal development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances. 33 Ref.

Risk and Protective Factors in Developing Psychopathology

Rolf, J.; Masten, A.S.; Cicchetti, D.; Nuechterlein, K.H.; and Wientraaub, S. (Eds.)

Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

(Reprints available from Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011.)

This book presents a review of the origins and implications of developmental psychopathology and what has been learned about psychosocial resilience in diverse populations at risk for maladaptation. Investigators in clinical psychology, psychiatry, and child development provide an overview of current research on vulnerability and resistance to disorders spanning infancy to adulthood. The book is divided into five parts. The first chapters provide an introduction to developmental psychopathology; Part II covers early risks to development. This section, exploring the high-risk child paradigm, contains chapters on early contributors to development risk, high-risk environments, children who survive, children at medical risk, and the state of uncertainty. Part III explores the theme of competence under adversity, with emphasis on studies of school-aged children. The last two sections focus on adaptation in adolescence and adulthood, the latter part dealing primarily with schizophrenia.

For further information, write to NCADI, P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852

Groups, Programs, & Organizations

Addiction Research Foundation
33 Russell Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M55 2S1
416-595-6056

Al-Anon/Alateen Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
P.O. Box 862
Midtown Station
New York, NY 10018-0862
212-302-7240
1-800-344-2666 (U.S.)
1-800-443-4525 (Canada)

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
World Services, Inc.
468 Park Avenue, South
New York, NY 10016
212-686-1100

Children of Alcoholics Foundation, Inc.
555 Madison Avenue, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10166
212-351-2680

Coalition on Alcohol and Drug Dependent Women and Their Children
Washington Office of NCADD
1511 K Street, NW, Suite 926
Washington, DC 20005
202-737-8122

COSSMHO
1030 15th Street, NW, Suite 1035
Washington, DC 20005
202-371-2100

Families Anonymous
P.O. Box 548
Van Nuys, CA 91408
818-989-7841

Institute on Black Chemical Abuse
261 Nicollet Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55408
612-871-7878

National Association for Children of Alcoholics
31582 Coast Highway, Suite B
South Laguna, CA 92677
714-499-3889

National Association for Native American Children of Alcoholics
P.O. Box 18736
Seattle, WA 98118
206-322-5601

National Association for Perinatal Addiction Research and Education
11 East Hubbard Street, Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60611
312-329-2512

National Black Alcoholism Council, Inc.
1629 K Street, NW, Suite 802
Washington, DC 20006
202-296-2696

National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health
38th & R Street, NW
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